

SUMMER 2017

ON THE RHODE

NEWS AND UPDATES FROM
RHODE ISLAND TEACHER OF THE YEAR 2017



Mr. G. Goes to Washington

The 2017 State Teacher of the Year cohort was reunited for a week of professional development, camaraderie, and celebration in Washington, DC. During our time in the nation's capital, we had the opportunity to learn about the incredible resources available through ASCD; we visited museums and museum educators with the Smithsonian; learned about leadership opportunities with fellows from the US Department of Education; talked education policy with Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos; and had a once in a lifetime opportunity to visit the Oval Office with the President of the United States. As the culmination of our week, we attended a beautiful gala at the historic Willard Hotel. Our 2017 State Teachers of the Year cohort represent so many different types of educators from across the country and I am so proud to know them.

Follow our cohort's progress on Twitter and Facebook: #NTOY17



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Passing the Torch

Congratulations Kristin Hayes-Leite, RITTOY 2018!



"In this field of public education, I am surrounded by heroes: students, teachers, families, and administrators, who individually persist in the epic struggle to obtain or deliver a quality education. It is time to stand up for one another and take pride in public education." - Kristin Hayes-Leite, Rhode Island Teacher of the Year 2018

One of the greatest pleasures of my year as Rhode Island Teacher of the Year The 2017 has been networking with our District Teacher of the Year cohort. Great things happen when some of the most talented teachers from Rhode Island's 40+ LEAs gather in one place! After a year of intense professional learning, our cohort was more than ready for the rigorous RITTOY application process. Our finalists were challenged with in depth reflections on their own teaching and learning, classroom observations, student, colleague, and administrator interviews, presentation of learning artifacts, and even a mock press conference. Through it all, Narragansett High School History teacher, Kristin Hayes-Leite emerged as our next Rhode Island Teacher of the Year! Kristin has a powerful voice as an educator and embraces the power of a strong school community. It is with great confidence and pride that the Teacher of the Year panel has selected her to represent the diverse community of teachers and learners that make up Rhode Island's education landscape!

Save the Date: Salute to Rhode Island Educators WaterFire on Saturday September 23, 2017!



"The Teachers of the Year are here, and we are ready to engage! - Sydney Chaffee, 2017 National Teacher of the Year

The State Teachers of the Year were guests of honor at the 2017 National Forum on Education Policy. At the gathering of over 600 educators, policy makers, and education innovators, we had the opportunity to have meaningful conversation about the policies at the state and national level that impact teaching and learning in America. Check out #ECSNF2017 on Twitter and Facebook to read more about our experience!



We know which subgroups are underserved. If we aren't discussing how to address their needs, we're missing the point of equity. #ECSNF17

10:40 AM - 29 Jun 2017



Important to note that true inclusion means full integration of marginalized populations in policy, curriculum, school culture, & leadership

Jennifer Rosenthal @jenn_roenthal

"You can't have equity without inclusion" - Stephanie Wood-Garnett #ECSNF17



Reflections on Going Viral: An Unanticipated Opportunity to Advocate

After a long Friday at both the Rhode Island Department of Education and Beacon Charter High School for the Arts, the last thing I expected as I rode home on the RIPTA bus was to receive a call from a news reporter. Little did I know that the calls would keep on coming! Never in my wildest dreams could I have imagined the outpouring of support I have received from friends, family, colleagues, my fellow State Teachers of the Year, CCSSO, the Rhode Island Department of Education, our Governor, and people all over the world. I have been incredibly humbled and honored to have a platform to highlight the unique challenges faced by the LGBTQ community in schools!



Like Comment Share
Anna Feder, Daemon Seibel and 23K others

"As LGBTQ people, our identities are complex, but our needs are universal - to be loved, to be respected for who we are, and to be fully equal citizens of the United States of America."

Click the image and quote to view the original Facebook Posts.

Interviews with Local and National Media Click below to read more!

Providence Journal

Washington Post

Boston Globe

National Public Radio

Yahoo

Valley Breeze



Click the images above to watch interviews with CNN and NBC10



Back at Beacon

When the going gets tough, all educators must remember why we do the work that we do. Each and every day when I walk the halls of Beacon Charter High School for the Arts, I see the faces of the young people who inspire and motivate me to do the best I can as an educator. As my colleagues and I watched my student artists graduate this year, we all felt a shared sense of joy, pride, and accomplishment! Congratulations Class of 2017!



Beacon Film: It Means Something

It's amazing what students will do when you give them the opportunity to express themselves! Over the past seven years, I have had the honor and privilege of supporting our student artists as they make short films that express who they are as individuals. Under the direction of my co-teacher, Katherine Reaves, the Class of 2017 has truly outdone themselves! [Click here to view a trailer with clips of each film!](#)

[Click the images below to view some of the incredible work of these talented young filmmakers!](#)



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THANK YOU

Words cannot adequately express how grateful I am to those who have supported me throughout this past year.

I have grown and changed. I have had opportunities to learn and network. I have been able to achieve things I never thought possible. As I continue in my work as an educator, I will always remember those who were with me on this journey.

Thank you, truly.

THE RHODE AHEAD

Though my year of service as Rhode Island Teacher of the Year 2017 has come to a close, I remain committed to making lasting change in the Rhode Island Education!

As I transition back to teaching full time at Beacon Charter High School for the Arts, and continuing my ongoing work with policy and advocacy groups, I look forward to seeking out more projects, organizations, and engagements that align with my platform.

I hope to continue advocating for special education students, the LGBTQ student community, and the arts in order to amplify the voices of those communities that mean the most to me.

Contact Me!

Nikos Giannopoulos

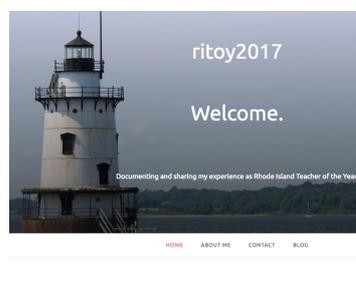
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FOR ADDITIONAL UPDATES FROM THE RHODE ISLAND TEACHER OF THE YEAR 2017

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